



## **Irene Pollin, M.S.W.**

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Irene Pollin, M.S.W., is the founder and president of the Sister to Sister: Everyone Has a Heart Foundation, an organization begun in 2000. Its mission is to help women learn about heart disease, how to prevent heart disease and to provide free heart health screenings. The Foundation has grown from sponsoring the women's heart campaign in Washington, DC, in 2000 to sponsoring National Woman's Heart Day in six major cities this past year, expanding nationally to 10 or 12 cities in 2005. Sister to Sister is now beginning an international campaign as well. On February 20 of 2003, approximately 15,000 women attended the health fairs, more than 3,500 women received heart disease screenings, and the media campaign reached more than 200 million people. Thirty percent of the women screened were found to be at risk.

Mrs. Pollin has a strong history in the medical profession; she entered the field in 1975 as a psychiatric social worker for Children's Hospital in Washington, DC.

In 1980 Mrs. Pollin established the Medical Crisis Counseling Center, an outpatient clinic that specialized in medical crisis counseling for chronically ill patients and their families. In addition, Mrs. Pollin had her own private clinical practice in Medical Crisis Counseling from 1982 to 1986. In 1986, she founded another center at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC.

Mrs. Pollin has published two books, *Medical Crisis Counseling* and *Taking Charge – Overcoming the Challenges of Long-Term Illness*; written numerous articles; and created videos on the mental and physical health of people coping with chronic illness. She has also been a featured speaker at workshops, conferences, and medical schools. Mrs. Pollin's honors include a Governor's Salute to Excellence for the State of Maryland, a Woman of the Valor Award from B'nai B'rith Women in Washington, DC, and a 2004 Woman's Day Red Dress Award. She was recently featured in the first issue of *Inspire Your World* magazine. She was appointed by the President of the United States to the National Cancer Advisory Board in 1986 and was made chair of the humanism task force to establish the Center for Humanizing Health Care from 1984–1986 at the Washington Hospital Center. She serves on the Advisory Committee on Research on Women's Health at the NIH, on the board of the National Symphony, and on The Center for Women's Health Advisory Committee at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. Mrs. Pollin has a B.S. in Cultural Anthropology from American University and a master's degree in social work from Catholic University.